



# Tobacco-Free College Proposal

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## Proposal

After careful consideration, the Unity College Wellness Committee is recommending to the Leadership Council and the Unity College Board of Trustees that the college become a tobacco-free beginning fall semester of 2009. The committee arrived at this decision after discussions in student, staff, and faculty forums; review of current health research; results of Unity College and national student data research; and environmental research.

## Rationale

*Unity College is a small, private college in rural Maine that provides dedicated, engaged students with a liberal arts education that emphasizes the environment and natural resources. Unity College graduates are prepared to be environmental stewards, effective leaders, and responsible citizens through active learning experiences within a supportive community.*

Unity College prides itself as a leader in environmental education and is working hard to have its policies and actions align with its mission and philosophy. Approval of a tobacco-free college policy will place Unity College in a leadership role in the state of Maine and throughout the country.

If this policy goes into effect for the fall semester of 2009, Unity College will be the first four-year college in Maine to enact such a policy. Unity College also will be the first and only residential college in New England with such a policy (American Lung Association of Oregon, 2008).

While the negative health effects of primary and secondary tobacco use have been well documented, the positive effects of tobacco-free policies are not as widely known. Several studies show that tobacco-free policies result in rapid and substantial reductions in hospital heart attack admissions (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008). Tobacco-free policies also have been shown to decrease the number of smokers in a given workplace (Services, 2006). Enacting a tobacco-free policy would enhance campus air quality and may help improve the overall health of the college employees.

Tobacco cultivation has negative effects on the environment as well. Large amounts of pesticides used in tobacco farming leach into the local ground water (Chan, 1988). In Africa, an estimated 500,000 acres of woodlands are cut annually to support tobacco farming. Nearly three quarters of this wood is used for curing the tobacco. In the US, natural gas, coal, and oil are common alternative to wood (WWF, 2002).

Some members of the campus community will resent the change to a tobacco-free college; this sentiment is inevitable with any change. However, studies have found that community

support for smoke-free laws increases in both smoking and nonsmoking populations and that people prefer working in a smoke-free environment (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008).

Finally, a tobacco-free policy will benefit the college. Besides being used as a marketing tool, it may help to improve the health of its employees. The campus will be cleaner. There will be no cigarette or chewing tobacco refuse to be cleaned and unsightly cigarette receptacles can be removed. This may prove to be a cost savings but would be hard to track.

The Wellness Committee believes that this proposed change to college policy will benefit Unity College on many levels and will be a positive and strong step toward achieving the goal of becoming “America’s Environmental College.”

## Research

### EXTERNAL RESEARCH

In the fall of 2007, President Mitchell Thomashow gave the Wellness Committee the task of reviewing the current smoking policy (see [Appendix A](#)). Furthermore the committee was asked to consider all options regarding possible modifications of the current smoking policy, including that of a smoke-free campus. During the committee’s initial discussions, the consensus was that too many people smoke on campus and, therefore, a smoke-free campus is an unrealistic goal. One immediate point of agreement was to move from a smoking policy to a tobacco policy.

Given the well-known health risks of smoking, the committee’s research focused on answering the following questions:

1. Do other colleges in the United States have tobacco-free policies?
2. What impact did this policy have on the students, staff, and faculty?
3. How were any such policies implemented?

The Wellness Committee found that the American Lung Association of Oregon had compiled a list of U.S. academic institutions that have 100% tobacco-free policies (see [Appendix B](#)). In January 2008 the list contained 48 institutions, 14 of which could be considered four-year liberal arts colleges. Notable institutions on this list include Indiana University, University of Arkansas, and Oklahoma State University. As of September 2008 this list includes 73 schools with the addition of such notables as Creighton University and East Tennessee State University. A significant number of the schools on the Lung Association list are two-year, non-residential colleges and medical schools (American Lung Association of Oregon, 2007).

The Wellness Committee decided to speak with six of the four-year liberal arts institutions about their development and implementation of a tobacco-free policy.

School	Location	Enrollment	Residential	Start date
Hocking College	Nelsonville, OH	5,500	420	Sept. 2006
Ozarks Technical Community College	Springfield, MO	10,000	0	Aug. 2003
Lander University	Greenwood, SC	2,600	1,000	Aug. 2007
North Georgia College and State University	Dahlonega, GA	5,200	1,500	1994
Minnesota State-Morehead	Morehead MN	7,200	1,400	Jan. 2008
Greensboro College	Greensboro, NC	1,200	500	Aug. 2008

The committee posed the following seven basic questions in its interviews with these institutions:

1. When did your tobacco-free policy go into effect?
2. What were students, staff, faculty, and the community reactions to it?
3. Did the policy change have an impact on enrollment?
4. Do you allow smoking in private vehicles?
5. How do you enforce the policy?
6. How many students attend your school? Residential students?
7. What was the implementation process?

Each of these institutions told basically the same story—survey, research, get input from the various campus constituencies, promote the change, and finally implement it. Most schools completed this process in 6-18 months. Reactions to the policy change ranged from student protests to no problems. Most institutions surveyed said that the transition was smooth with some complaints but very good compliance. The school that had student protests (North Georgia) cited the president imposing the policy as the reason for the protests.

Regarding enrollment issues, the consensus of institutions polled was that the tobacco-free policy had no effect—positive or negative—on enrollment. Most schools reported increased enrollment but could not attribute it to their tobacco-free policy.

Enforcement at all these institutions is through the student code of conduct. Most violations have been handled with verbal warnings and reminders about the policy. Fines have been issued, but primarily to repeat offenders. Some institutions permit smoking in

cars; others do not. Some do not address this issue at all. Five of the six schools rated the transition to tobacco-free college as smooth.

### INTERNAL RESEARCH

Late in the fall semester of 2007, Unity College administered the American College Health Association (ACHA) survey to its students. This survey asks questions about a broad range of health-related issues. Among the information gathered is student data about tobacco. Two hundred thirty-one students took the survey and all classes were well represented. The survey reveals that only 7.4% (40 students) of the respondents smoke daily; however, respondents' perceptions are that 47% of the students smoke daily. According to ACHA survey results, 75% of the respondents have never smoked or have not smoked in the last 30 days. The responses regarding smokeless tobacco show only 4.4% (24 people) use it on a daily basis.

#### 2007 ACHA survey results

<b>Smoking</b>	% responses	Perception
Never used	61.1	<b>3.9</b>
Used, but not last 30 days	14.4	
Used in last 30 days	<b>16.1</b>	<b>48.7</b>
<b>Use daily</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>47.4</b>

<b>Smokeless tobacco</b>	% users
Never used	73.4
Used, but not last 30 days	11.4
Used in last 30 days	10.9
Use daily	4.4

The Wellness Committee presented the prospect of a tobacco-free college to the students, staff, and faculty at a community meeting in March of 2008. During this meeting committee members explained that we were soliciting student opinions about Unity College going tobacco free. The discussion was open for approximately 15 minutes and there was little dissent. The main dissenting arguments presented were:

1. We have a right to smoke.
2. People do not follow the current smoking policy, so how do you expect people to follow a no-tobacco one?
3. Smokers will congregate on Quaker Hill Road since the road is not Unity College property.

The Wellness Committee also presented the prospect of a tobacco-free college at a staff meeting in March 2008. During this meeting, the staff's chief concern was the students. Statements were made such as, "I smoke so a tobacco-free college will affect me, but when I leave work I can go home and smoke. What will students who live on campus do if they cannot smoke on campus?" The custodial staff at the meeting felt that campus would be

cleaner under a tobacco-free policy because there would be no cigarette butts or spit bottles to pick up. The staff had no strong opposition at this meeting.

## **MEDICAL RESEARCH**

The dangers of smoking tobacco have been well documented over the last two decades. There is overwhelming evidence of the detrimental effects that smoking has on human health and the committee members believe that it does not warrant further discussion. However, the dangers of secondhand smoke have become more evident over the last decade and are one of the primary considerations in instituting a tobacco-free policy.

In 1986, Surgeon General Dr. C. Everett Coop was the first surgeon general to conclude that exposure to secondhand smoke causes disease in his report, *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Smoking*. Since this 1986 report, the research has shown a definitive link between secondhand smoke and disease. According to the 2006 Surgeon General Report *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke*, “exposure of adults to secondhand smoke has immediate adverse effects on the cardiovascular system and causes coronary heart disease and lung cancer” (Services, 2006).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have compiled data from many sources and published the following statements about secondhand smoke:

1. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the National Institutes of Health-National Toxicology Program, and the International Agency for Research on Cancer have concluded that secondhand smoke is a known carcinogen. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has concluded that secondhand smoke is an occupational carcinogen (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008).
2. There is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008).
3. Smoke-free policies are the only effective way to protect nonsmokers from secondhand smoke. Separating smokers from nonsmokers, cleaning the air and ventilating buildings cannot eliminate nonsmokers' exposure to secondhand smoke (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008).
4. Smokeless tobacco is a significant health risk and is not a safe substitute for smoking cigarettes. It contains 28 cancer-causing agents (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008).

While tobacco use and secondhand smoke have well-documented negative effects on the human population, tobacco cultivation has a negative impact on the environment. Growing tobacco requires the use of many chemicals. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) estimates that at least 25.6 million pounds of pesticides are used annually to grow tobacco. The Environmental Protection Agency has more than 450 pesticides registered for use on

tobacco (Chan, 1988). Tobacco cultivation also requires significant use of fertilizers since the farming of tobacco exhausts the soil. The WWF estimates that 200,000 hectares of woodlands are cut annually to support tobacco farming (WWF, 2002).

## **Implementation**

The Wellness Committee recommends that the tobacco-free college policy go into effect for fall semester of 2009. To facilitate a smooth transition to the new policy, the committee suggests the timeline in [Appendix C](#). Once the Leadership Council and the Unity College Board of Trustees approve the policy change, the committee will begin to inform the campus of the impending change. This will be accomplished through various means including, but not limited to email, community meetings, staff meetings, faculty meetings, signage, word of mouth, and coordination with Admissions, Residence Life and the Student Affairs Office. During these meetings, the Wellness Committee will stress the importance of each group sharing accurate information throughout the college community and of enforcing the current smoking policy. For individuals that are not sure how to request that smokers refrain from smoking or relocate to currently approved smoking areas, the Wellness Committee will offer assertiveness training workshops to assist the community with enforcing the policy now in place.

The Wellness Committee also will begin to stress smoking cessation programs and strategies. This activity will be a coordinated effort with The Partnership for a Tobacco Free Maine, Healthy Maine Partnership, and The Center for Tobacco Independence.

Enforcement of a Tobacco-Free College Policy will be accomplished through the current employee discipline policies and the student code of conduct.

The effectiveness of this policy can be tracked through incident reports, public safety reports, and ACHA data trends.

## **Tobacco-Free College Policy**

### **Purpose**

As America's Environmental College, Unity College recognizes the importance of healthy educational, work, and global environments and is committed to sustainability in all these areas. The purpose of this policy is to reduce harm from secondhand smoke, provide an environment that encourages persons to be free of tobacco, establishes a campus culture of wellness, and promotes a tobacco-free future.

This commitment involves taking a leadership role in discouraging tobacco use by prohibiting its use in all Unity College properties and activities.

### **Policy**

Effective August 2009, Unity College will be a tobacco-free college. The use of tobacco is prohibited on all college properties, at all college functions, and during all college-sponsored activities. This includes, but is not limited to, all buildings, parking areas, vehicles, Unity Centre for the Performing Arts, the Field of Dreams, and the woodlot.

Tobacco use includes the possession of any lighted tobacco product and the use of any oral tobacco product.

### **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of all members of the campus community and their visitors to observe and enforce this policy.

### **Procedures**

All members of the campus community will be informed of this policy. Education regarding the tobacco-free college policy will be included in new student and employee orientations.

Signs will be posted throughout the campus to inform college community members and visitors, including and contractors and vendors, of the policy.

### **Compliance**

Compliance with policy is the shared responsibility and the right of all Unity College staff, students, and faculty members. The success of this policy depends upon the courtesy, respect, and cooperation of tobacco products users and non-users alike.

Violations of this policy will be handled according to the student code of conduct and employee disciplinary policies.

## Appendix A

### **SMOKING POLICY** (from student handbook)

In consideration for others and consistent with the college's commitment to providing a healthy working, living, and learning environment, smoking is restricted on campus.

Smoking is prohibited in all parts of all buildings on campus and within 25 feet of all buildings. Smoking is prohibited in all entrances to all Unity College buildings and on the steps of Eastview, Westview, and Cianchette and Wood Hall. Smokers are responsible for their own cigarette waste and should take measures to avoid littering the campus.

Unity College has designated smoke-free zones on campus, which include the woodlot and the sites of all college-sponsored outdoor group events (i.e., athletic events, receptions, classes, etc.)

The success of this policy will depend on the thoughtfulness, consideration, and cooperation of smokers and nonsmokers alike. Everyone shares the responsibility for adhering to and enforcing this policy. On-campus smoking cessation programs are made available through the Health and Wellness Center. They will assist and encourage students, faculty, and staff who wish to quit smoking.

### **SMOKING POLICY** (from employee handbook)

In consideration for others, and consistent with the college's commitment to providing a healthy working, living, and learning environment, smoking is restricted to designated areas. Smoking is prohibited in all parts of all buildings on campus and within 25 feet of all buildings. Additional information: When smoking outside of buildings, people should not litter the campus with cigarette butts. On-site smoking cessation programs will be made available through the health center to assist and encourage students, faculty, and staff who wish to quit smoking.

## Appendix B



### Colleges and Universities with 100% Tobacco-Free Campus Policies

Updated September 2008

**Note:** This list includes colleges and universities prohibiting smoking and all forms of tobacco use everywhere on campus (no designated smoking areas). For colleges that have announced but not yet implemented a new policy, a date in parentheses indicates when the campus will be 100% tobacco-free.

Arkansas	<a href="#">National Park Community College</a> <a href="#">North Arkansas College</a> <a href="#">University of Arkansas</a>	North Carolina	<a href="#">A-B Technical Community College</a> <a href="#">Barber Scotia College</a> <a href="#">Bennett College</a> <a href="#">Cleveland Community College</a> <a href="#">College of the Albemarle</a> <a href="#">Gardner-Webb University</a> <a href="#">Greensboro College</a> (Fall 2008) <a href="#">Guilford Technical Community College</a> <a href="#">Haywood Community College</a> <a href="#">Louisburg College</a> <a href="#">Montreat College</a> <a href="#">Roanoke-Chowan Community College</a> <a href="#">Stanly Community College</a> <a href="#">Wake Technical College</a> <a href="#">Wingate University</a>
California	<a href="#">Santa Rosa Junior College</a> <a href="#">Woodland Community College</a>	North Dakota	<a href="#">Bismark State College</a> <a href="#">Jamestown College</a> <a href="#">University of ND</a> <a href="#">Valley City State University</a>
Georgia	<a href="#">Darton College</a> <a href="#">Gainesville State College</a> <a href="#">Georgia Highlands College</a> <a href="#">Medical College of Georgia</a> <a href="#">North Georgia College &amp; State University</a> <a href="#">Southwest Georgia Technical College</a>	Ohio	<a href="#">Hocking College</a>
Indiana	<a href="#">Indiana University</a> <a href="#">Ivy Tech Community College</a> (all campuses in regions 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8-12)	Oklahoma	<a href="#">Oklahoma State U. -Oklahoma City</a> <a href="#">Oklahoma City University</a>
Iowa	<a href="#">AIB College of Business</a> <a href="#">Des Moines Area Community College</a> <a href="#">Des Moines University</a> <a href="#">Iowa Lakes Community College</a> <a href="#">Iowa Valley Community College District</a> <a href="#">Mercy College of Health Sciences</a> <a href="#">North Iowa Area Community College</a> <a href="#">Southeastern Community College</a> <a href="#">Southwestern Community College</a> <a href="#">Western Iowa Tech Community College</a> (Note: The 2008 Iowa Smokefree Air Act prohibits smoking on college campuses.)	Oregon	<a href="#">Chemeketa CC Dallas Center</a> <a href="#">Oregon Health &amp; Science University</a> <a href="#">Oregon College of Oriental Medicine</a> <a href="#">Portland Community College</a> (Fall 2009) <a href="#">Western States Chiropractic College</a>
Maine	<a href="#">Kennebec Valley Community College</a>	South Carolina	<a href="#">Lander University</a>
Maryland	<a href="#">Garrett College</a> <a href="#">Harford Community College</a>	South Dakota	<a href="#">Oglala Lakota College</a>
Michigan	<a href="#">Delta College</a>	Tennessee	<a href="#">East Tennessee State University</a>
Minnesota	<a href="#">Itasca Community College</a> <a href="#">Minnesota State U. Moorhead</a> <a href="#">Northwest Technical College</a> <a href="#">University of Minnesota, Crookston</a>	Texas	<a href="#">Northwest Vista College</a>
Missouri	<a href="#">Ozarks Technical Community College</a> <a href="#">St. Charles Community College</a> <a href="#">St. Louis Community College at Wildwood</a>	Virginia	<a href="#">Jefferson College of Health Sciences</a>
Nebraska	<a href="#">College of Saint Mary</a> <a href="#">Creighton University</a>	Washington	<a href="#">Clark College</a>
		West Virginia	<a href="#">West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine</a>
		Wisconsin	<a href="#">Alverno College</a> <a href="#">Western Technical College</a> <a href="#">Medical College of Wisconsin</a>

#### Tobacco-Free Campus Resources

**American Lung Association of Oregon:** See <http://www.lungoregon.org/tobacco/college.html> for resources including a comprehensive model policy "Tobacco-Free Environment". Contact: 503-824-4094 or [healthinfo@lungoregon.org](mailto:healthinfo@lungoregon.org) for more information and assistance.

**Center of Excellence for Tobacco-Free Campus Policy, Ozarks Technical Community College:** Consultations on tobacco-free policy for any higher ed institution. See <http://www.otc.edu/about/tobaccofree.php> for contact information.



## Appendix C

### Timeline

Start date	Task	Responsibility	Cost	Completion
Fall 2007	Wellness Committee discussions about current smoking policy	Wellness Committee	\$0.00	Fall 2008
January 2008	Talk with other colleges about tobacco-free policies	Chris Kein, Anna McGalliard	\$0.00	January 2008
March-April 2008	Meet with students, staff, and faculty to gauge feeling about the college being tobacco free	Wellness Committee	\$0.00	Students 3/08 Staff 4/08 Faculty 10/08
May 2008	Meet with district tobacco coordinator about assistance available through Partnership for a Tobacco-Free Maine	Wellness Committee	\$0.00	May 2008
September 2008	Develop proposal and policy to present to Unity College Board of Trustees and Leadership Council	Wellness Committee	\$0.00	September 2008
September 2008	Meet with SGA regarding proposal for tobacco-free college and ask for support	Chris Kein	\$0.00	September 2008 met with SGA and they recommended holding a public hearing about policy change
October 2008	Present to Leadership Council and Unity College Board of Trustees	Chris Kein	\$0.00	
October 2008	Campus public hearing about policy	Wellness committee		Free through Partnership for Tobacco-Free Maine
November 2008	Begin placing signs in current tobacco free location on campus	Wellness Committee	\$0.00	
November 2008	Press conference about Unity as 1 <sup>st</sup> four-year residential college to be tobacco-free	Marketing Committee	\$0.00	

<b>Start date</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Completion</b>
November 2008	Link to Partnership to a Tobacco-Free Maine on for tobacco cessation info, etc.	IT	\$0.00	
November 2008	Begin meeting with campus groups to discuss tobacco-free policy and strategies to deals with this change	Wellness Committee		Community meeting, staff meeting, faculty meeting, SGA,
November 2008	2009 College publication to cite Tobacco-Free policy	Marketing Committee		
November 2008	Identify areas for signs	Wellness Committee, Facilities Director		
January 2008	Talk with town of Unity about Quaker Hill Rd being tobacco-free	Health Center/Wellness Committee		
January 2009	Begin smoking cessation programs			
February 2009	Update off-campus housing lists to include listing for tobacco-free rental units	Wellness Committee		Phone added to Student Affairs Office
February 2009	Campus-wide assertiveness/civility training--how to ask a smoker to refrain or move 25' from building, etc.	Wellness Committee		
February 2009	RA tobacco-free programming	Resident Life		
April 2009	Print tobacco-free policy card to hand out as policy reminders	Wellness Committee		Possible funding through Partnership for Tobacco-Free Maine
April 2009	Place policy posters in the residence halls	Residence Life		

<b>Start date</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Completion</b>
Summer 2009	Permanent tobacco-free signage to be placed on campus; remove smoking receptacles	Maintenance		
August 2009	Unity College tobacco-free	Everyone		Continue cessation and support services

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